

# L E T H E.

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

**ÆSOP.**  
**MERCURY.**  
**CHARON.**  
**LORD CHALKSTONE.**  
**A Fine Gentleman.**  
**Drunken Man.**  
**Frenchman.**



**Old Man.**  
**Mr. TATTOO,**  
**Poet.**  
**Taylor.**

**Mrs. RIOT.**  
**Mrs. TATTOO.**

N. B. The Poet and Taylor are omitted in the Representation.

### SCENE, a Grove.

With a View of the River Lethe.

Charon and Æsop discovered.

**Cha.** **PR**'YTHEE, philosopher, what grand affair is transacting upon earth? There is something of importance going forward, I am sure; for Mercury flew over the Styx this morning, without paying me the usual compliments.

**Æs.** I'll tell thee, Charon; this is the anniversary of the rape of Proserpine; on which day, for the future, Pluto has permitted her to demand from him something for the benefit of mankind.

**Cha.** I understand you—his majesty's passion, by a long possession of the lady, is abated; and so, like a mere mortal, he must now flatter her vanity and sacrifice his power, to atone for deficiencies—But what has our royal mistress proposed in behalf of her favourite mortals?

**Æs.** As mankind, you know, are ever complaining of their cares, and dissatisfied with their conditions, the generous Proserpine has begg'd of Pluto, that they may have free access to the waters of Lethe, as a sovereign remedy for their complaints. Notice has been already given above, and proclamation made; Mercury is to conduct them to the Styx, you are to ferry 'em over to Elysium, and I am placed here to distribute the waters.

**Cha.** A very pretty employment I shall have of it, truly! if her majesty has often these whims, I must petition the court either to build a bridge over the river, or let me resign my employment. Do their majesties know the difference of weight between souls and bodies? However, I'll obey their commands to the best of my power; I'll row my crazy boat over, and meet 'em; but many of them will be relieved from their cares before they reach Lethe.

**Æs.** How so, Charon?

**Cha.** Why, I shall leave half of 'em in the Styx; and any water is a specific against care, provided it be taken in quantity.

*Enter Mercury.*

**Mer.** Away to your boat, Charon; there are some mortals arriv'd; and the females among 'em will be very clamorous, if you make 'em wait.

**Cha.** I'll make what haste I can, rather than give those fair creatures a topic for conversation.

[Noise within, Boat, boat, boat!]

—Coming—coming—gounds, you are in a plaguy hurry, sure! no wonder these mortal folks have so many complaints, when there's no patience among 'em; if they were dead now, and to be settled here for ever, they'd be damn'd before they'd make such a rout to come over—but care, I suppose, is thirsty, and till they have drench'd themselves with Lethe, there will be no quiet among 'em; therefore, I'll 'en go to work—and so, friend Æsop, and brother Mercury, good bye to ye. [Exit Charon.]

**Æs.** Now to my office of judge and examiner, in which, to the best of my knowledge, I will act with impartiality; for I will immediately relieve real objects, and only divert myself with pretenders.

**Mer.** Act as your wisdom directs, and conformable to your earthly character, and we shall have few murmurers.

**Æs.** I still retain my former sentiments, never to refuse advice or charity to those that want either; flattery and rudeness should be equally avoided; folly and vice should never be spared; and though by acting thus, you may offend many, yet you will please the better few; and the approbation of one virtuous mind, is more valuable than all the noisy applause, and uncertain favours, of the great and guilty.

**Mer.** Incomparable Æsop! both men and gods admire thee! we must now prepare to receive these mortals; and lest the solemnity of the place should strike 'em with too much greed, I'll raise musick shall dispel their fears, and embolden them to approach.

### S O N G.

#### I.

*To mortals whom fancies and troubles perplex,  
Whom folly misguides, and infirmities vex;  
Whose lives hardly know what it is to be blest,  
Who rise without joy, and lie down without rest;  
Obey the glad summons, to Lethe repair,  
Drink deep of the stream, and forget all your care.*

#### II.

*Old maids shall forget what they wish for in vain,  
And young ones the power they cannot regain;  
The rake shall forget how last night he was cloy'd,  
And Chloë again be with passion enjoy'd;  
Obey then the summons, to Lethe repair,  
And drink an oblivion to trouble and care.*

## III.

*The wife at one draught may forget all her wants,  
Or drench her fond fool, to forget her gallants;  
The troubled in mind shall go cheerful away,  
And yesterday's wretch be quite buppy to-day;  
Obey then the summons, to Lethe repair,  
Drink deep of the stream, and forget all your care.*

*Æs.* Mercury, Charon has brought over one mortal already, conduct him hither. [*Exit Mercury.*—Now for a large catalogue of complaints without the acknowledgment of one single vice—here he comes—if one may guess at his cares by his appearance, he really wants the assistance of Lethe.

*Enter Poet.*

*Poet.* Sir, your humble servant—your humble servant—your name is *Æsop*—I know your person intimately, though I never saw you before; and am well acquainted with you, tho' I never had the honour of your conversation.

*Æs.* You are a dealer in paradoxes, friend.

*Poet.* I am a dealer in all parts of speech, and in all the figures of rhetoric—I am a poet, Sir—and to be a poet, and not acquainted with the great *Æsop*, is a greater paradox than—I honour you extremely, Sir; you certainly, of all the writers of antiquity, had the greatest, the sublimest genius, the—

*Æs.* Hold, friend, I hate flattery.

*Poet.* My own taste exactly, I assure you; Sir, no man loves flattery less than myself.

*Æs.* So it appears, Sir, by your being so ready to give it away.

*Poet.* You have hit it, Mr. *Æsop*, you have hit it—I have given it away indeed; I did not receive one farthing for my last dedication, and yet would you believe it!—I absolutely gave all the virtues in heav'n, to one of the lowest reptiles upon earth.

*Æs.* 'Tis hard, indeed, to do dirty work for nothing.

*Poet.* Ay, Sir, to do dirty work, and still be dirty one's self, is the stone of Syſphus, and the thirst of Tantalus—You Greek writers, indeed, carried your point by truth and simplicity,—they won't do now a-days—our patrons must be tickled into generosity—you gain'd the greatest favours, by shewing your own merits; we can only gain the smallest, by publishing those of other people.—You flourish'd by truth, we starve by fiction; *tempora instantur.*

*Æs.* Indeed, friend, if we may guess by your present plight, you have prostituted your talents to very little purpose.

*Poet.* To very little, upon my word—but they shall find that I can open another vein—satire is the fashion, and satire they shall have—let 'em look to it, I can be sharp as well as sweet—I can scourge as well as tickle, I can bite as—

*Æs.* You can do any thing, no doubt; but to the business of this visit, for I expect a great deal of company—What are your troubles, Sir?

*Poet.* Why, Mr. *Æsop*, I am troubled with an odd kind of disorder—I have a sort of a whistling—a ringing—a whizzing—as it were in my head, which I cannot get rid of—

*Æs.* Our waters give no relief to bodily disorders, they only afflict the memory.

*Poet.* From whence all my disorder proceeds—I'll tell you my case, Sir—You must know, I wrote a play some time ago, presented a dedication of it to a certain young nobleman—he approv'd, and accepted of it; but before I could taste his bounty, my piece was unfortunately damn'd;—I lost my benefit, nor could I have recourse to my patron, for I was told that his lordship play'd the best catcall the

first night, and was the merriest person in the whole audience.

*Æs.* Pray what do you call damning a play?

*Poet.* You cannot possibly be ignorant, what it is to be damn'd, Mr. *Æsop*?

*Æs.* Indeed I am, Sir—we had no such thing among the Greeks.

*Poet.* No, Sir!—No wonder, then, that you Greeks were such fine writers—It is impossible to be described, or truly felt, but by the author himself—If you could but get a leave of absence from this world for a few hours, you might perhaps have an opportunity of seeing it yourself—There is a sort of a new piece comes upon our stage this very night, and I am pretty sure it will meet with its deserts; at least it shall not want my helping hand, rather than you should be disappointed of satisfying your curiosity.

*Æs.* You are very obliging, Sir;—but to your own misfortunes, if you please.

*Poet.* Envy, malice, and party, destroy'd me—You must know, Sir, I was a great damner myself, before I was damn'd—So the stolicks of my youth were returned to me with double interest, from my brother authors—but to say the truth, my performance was terribly handled, before it appear'd in publick.

*Æs.* How so, pray?

*Poet.* Why, Sir, some squeamish friends of mine prun'd it of all the bawdy and immorality, the actors did not speak a line of the sense or sentiment, and the manager (who writes himself) struck out all the wit and humour, in order to lower my performance to a level with his own.

*Æs.* Now, Sir, I am acquainted with your case; what have you to propose?

*Poet.* Notwithstanding the success of my first play, I am strongly persuaded that my next may defy the severity of critics, the sneer of wits, and the malice of authors.

*Æs.* What! have you been hardy enough to attempt another?

*Poet.* I must eat, Sir—I must live—but when I sit down to write, and am glowing with the heat of my imagination, then—then this damn'd whistling—or whizzing in my head, that I told you of, so disorders me, that I grow giddy—In short, Sir, I am haunted, as it were, with the ghost of my decess'd play, and its dying groans are for ever in my ears—Now, Sir, if you will give me but a draught of Lethe, to forget this unfortunate performance, it will be of more real service to me than all the waters of Helicon.

*Æs.* I doubt, friend, you cannot possibly write better, by merely forgetting that you have written before; besides, if, when you drink to the forgetfulness of your own works, you should unluckily forget those of other people too, your next piece will certainly be the worse for it.

*Poet.* You are certainly in the right—What then would you advise me to?

*Æs.* Suppose you could prevail upon the audience to drink the water; their forgetting your former work, might be of no small advantage to your future productions.

*Poet.* Ah, Sir! if I could but do that—but I am afraid—Lethe will never go down with the audience.

*Æs.* Well, since you are bent upon it, I shall indulge you—if you please to walk in that grove, (which will afford you many subjects for your poetical contemplation) till I have examined the rest, I will dismiss you in your turn.

*Poet.* And I in return, Sir, will let the world

know, in a preface to my next piece, that your politeness is equal to your sagacity; and that you are as much the fine gentleman as the philosopher.

[Exit Poet.]

*Æf.* Oh! your servant, Sir—In the name of misery and mortality, what have we here!

*Enter an Old Man, supported by a Servant.*

*Old Man.* Oh! la! oh! blest me, I shall never recover the fatigue—Hal! what are you, friend? are you the famous *Æsop*? and are you so kind, so very good, to give people the waters of forgetfulness for nothing?

*Æf.* I am that person, Sir; but you seem to have no need of my waters; for you must have already out-liv'd your memory.

*Old Man.* My memory is indeed impair'd, it is not so good as it was; but still it is better than I wish it, at least in regard to one circumstance; there is one thing which sits very heavy at my heart, and which I would willingly forget.

*Æf.* What is it, pray?

*Old Man.* Oh, la!—oh!—I am horribly fatigued—I am an old man, Sir, turn'd of ninety—We are all mortal, you know, so I would fain forget, if you please—that I am to die.

*Æf.* My good friend, you have mistaken the virtue of the waters; they can cause you to forget only what is past; but if this was in their power, you would surely be your own enemy, in desiring to forget what ought to be the only comfort of one so poor and wretched as you seem. What! I suppose now, you have left some dear, loving wife behind, that you can't bear to think of parting with.

*Old Man.* No, no, no; I have buried my wife, and forgot her long ago.

*Æf.* What, you have children then, whom you are unwilling to leave behind you!

*Old Man.* No, no, no; I have no children at present—hugh—I don't know what I may have.

*Æf.* Is there any relation or friend, the loss of whom—

*Old Man.* No, no; I have out-liv'd all my relations; and as for my friends—I have none to lose.

*Æf.* What can be the reason, then, that in all this apparent misery, you are so afraid of death, which would be your only cure.

*Old Man.* Oh, lord!—I have one friend, and a true friend indeed, the only friend in whom a wise man places any confidence—I have—Get a little farther off, John—[*Servant retires.*] I have, to say the truth, a little money—it is that, indeed, which causes all my uneasiness.

*Æf.* Thou never spok'st a truer word in thy life, old gentleman—[*Aside.*] But I can cure you of your uneasiness immediately.

*Old Man.* Shall I forget then that I am to die, and leave my money behind me?

*Æf.* No—but you shall forget that you have it—which will do altogether as well—One large draught of Lethe, to the forgetfulness of your money, will restore you to perfect ease of mind; and as for your bodily pains, no water can relieve them.

*Old Man.* What does he say, John, eh? I am hard of hearing.

*John.* He advises your worship to drink to forget your money.

*Old Man.* What! What! Will his drink get me money, does he say?

*Æf.* No, Sir, the waters are of a wholesomer nature—for they'll teach you to forget your money.

*Old Man.* Will they so? Come, come, John, we are got to the wrong place—the poor old fool here does not know what he says—let us go back

again, John—I'll drink none of your waters! not I—forget my money!—Come along, John. [*Exit.*]

*Æf.* Was there ever such a wretch! If these are the cares of mortals, the waters of oblivion cannot cure them.

*Re-enter Old Man and Servant.*

*Old Man.* Look'e, Sir, I am come a great way, and am loth to refuse favours that cost nothing, so I don't care if I drink a little of your waters. Let me see, aye, I'll drink to forget how I got my money; and my servant there, he shall drink a little, to forget that I have any money at all—and d'ye hear, John! take a hearty draught. If my money must be forgot, why e'en let him forget it.

*Æf.* Well, friend, it shall be as you would have it; you'll find a seat in that grove yonder, where you may rest yourself till the waters are distributed.

*Old Man.* I hope it won't be long, Sir, for thieves are busy now; and I have an iron chest in the other world, that I should be sorry any one peep'd into but myself; so pray be quick, Sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Æf.* Patience, patience, old gentleman. But here comes something tripping this way, that seems to be neither man nor woman, and yet an odd mixture of both.

*Enter a Fine Gentleman.*

*Fine Gent.* Hark'e, old friend, do you stand drawer here?

*Æf.* Drawer, young fop! do you know where you are, and who you talk to?

*Fine Gent.* Not I, dem me! But 'tis a rule with me, wherever I am, or whosoever I am with, to be always easy and familiar.

*Æf.* Then let me advise you, young gentleman, to drink the waters, and forget that ease and familiarity.

*Fine Gent.* Why so, daddy? would you not have me well bred?

*Æf.* Yes; but you may not always meet with people so polite as yourself, or so passive as I am; and if what you call breeding, should be construed impertinence, you may have a return of familiarity, may make you repent your education as long as you live.

*Fine Gent.* Well said, old dry-beard; egad you have a smattering of an odd kind of a sort of a humour; but come, come, pry'thee, give me a glass of your waters, and keep your advice to yourself.

*Æf.* I must first be informed, Sir, for what purpose you drink 'em.

*Fine Gent.* You must know, philosopher, I want to forget two qualities—My modesty and my good-nature.

*Æf.* Your modesty and good-nature!

*Fine Gent.* Yes, Sir—I have such a consummate modesty, that when a fine woman (which is often the case) yields to my addresses, egad I run away from her; and I am so very good-natured, that when a man affronts me, egad I run away too.

*Æf.* As for your modesty, Sir, I am afraid you are come to the wrong waters—and if you would take a large cup to the forgetfulness of your fears, your good-nature, I believe, will trouble you no more.

*Fine Gent.* And this is your advice, my dear, eh?

*Æf.* My advice, Sir, would go a great deal farther—I should advise you to drink to the forgetfulness of every thing you know.

*Fine Gent.* The devil you would! then I should have travell'd to a fine purpose, truly; you don't imagine, perhaps, that I have been three years abroad, and have made the tour of Europe?



# L E T H E.

*Æf.* Yes, Sir, I guess'd you had travell'd, by your dress and conversation: but pray, (with submission) what valuable improvements have you made in these travels?

*Fine Gent.* Sir, I learnt drinking in Germany, music and painting in Italy, dancing, gaming, and some other amusements, at Paris; and in Holland—saith nothing at all; I brought over with me the best collection of Venetian ballads, two eunuchs, a French dancer, and a monkey, with tooth-picks, pictures, and burlettas—In short, I have skim'd the cream of every nation, and have the consolation to declare, I never was in any country in my life, but I had taste enough thoroughly to despise my own.

*Æf.* Your country is greatly obliged to you; but if you are settled in it now, how can your taste and delicacy endure it?

*Fine Gent.* Faith, my existence is merely supported by amusements; I dress, visit, study taste, and write sonnets; by birth, travel, education, and natural abilities, I am entitled to lead the fashion; I am principal connoisseur at all auctions, chief arbiter at assemblies, professed critic at the theatres, and a fine gentleman every where.

*Æf.* Critic, Sir! pray what's that?

*Fine Gent.* The delight of the ingenious, the terror of poets, the scourge of players, and the aversion of the vulgar.

*Æf.* Pray, Sir, (for I fancy your life must be somewhat particular) how do you pass your time; the day, the day, for instance?

*Fine Gent.* I lie in bed all day, Sir.

*Æf.* How do you spend your evenings then?

*Fine Gent.* I dress in the evening, and go generally behind the scenes of both playhouses; not, you may imagine, to be diverted with the play, but to intrigue, and shew myself—I stand upon the stage, talk loud, and stare about, which confounds the actors, and disturbs the audience; upon which the galleries, who hate the appearance of one of us, begin to hiss, and cry, off, off; while I undaunted stamp my foot so—loll with my shoulder thus—take snuff with my right-hand, and smile scornfully—thus—This exasperates the savages, and they attack us with volleys of suck'd oranges, and half-eaten pippens—

*Æf.* And you retire.

*Fine Gent.* Without doubt, if I am sober; for orange will stain silk, and an apple may disfigure a feature.

*Æf.* I am afraid, Sir, for all this, that you are oblig'd to your own imagination, for more than three-fourths of your importance.

*Fine Gent.* Damn the old prig, I'll bully him. [*Aside.*] Look'e, old philosopher, I find you have pass'd your time so long in gloom and ignorance below here, that our notions above stairs are too refined for you; so as we are not likely to agree, I shall cut matters very short with you—Bottle me off the waters I want, or you shall be convinc'd that I have courage, in the drawing of a cork: dispatch me instantly, or I shall make bold to throw you into the river, and help myself—What say you to that now? eh?

*Æf.* Very civil and concise! I have no great inclination to put your manhood to the trial; so if you will be pleas'd to walk in the grove there, till I have examined some I see coming, we'll compromise the affair between us.

*Fine Gent.* Your's, as you behave, au revoir!

[*Exit Fine Gent.*]

Enter Mr. Bowman, daffy,

*Bow.* Is your name Æsop?

*Æf.* It is, Sir, your commands with me?

*Bow.* My Lord Chalkstone, to whom I have the honour to be a friend and companion, has sent me before, to know if you are at leisure to receive his lordship.

*Æf.* I am plac'd here on purpose to receive every mortal that attends our summons.

*Bow.* My Lord is not of the common race of mortals, I assure you; and you must look upon this visit as a particular honour, for he is so much afflicted with the gout and rheumatism, that we had much ado to get him across the river.

*Æf.* His lordship has certainly some pressing occasion for the waters, that he endures such inconveniences to get at them.

*Bow.* No occasion at all—his legs indeed fail him a little, but as ever, nothing can hurt his spirits; ill or well, his lordship is always the best company, and the merriest in his family.

*Æf.* I have very little time for mirth and good company; but I'll lessen the fatigue of his journey, and meet him half way.

*Bow.* His lordship is here already. There's spirit! Mr. Æsop. There's a great man! See how superior he is to his infirmities: such a soul ought to have a better body.

Enter Mercury with Lord Chalkstone.

*L. Chalk.* Not so fast, Monsieur Mercury, you are a little too nimble for me.—Well, Bowman, have you found the philosopher?

*Bow.* This is he, my lord, and ready to receive your commands.

*L. Chalk.* Ha! Wa! ha! There he is, profecto! toujours le meme: [*Looking at him through a glass.*] I should have known him at a mile distance—a most noble personage indeed! and truly Greek from top to toe.—Most venerable Æsop, I am in this world and the other, above and below, yours most sincerely.

*Æf.* I am yours, my lord, as sincerely, and I wish it was in my power to relieve your misfortune.

*L. Chalk.* Misfortune! what misfortune? I am neither a porter nor a chairman, Mr. Æsop, my legs can bear my body to my friends and my bottles. I want no more with them; the gout is welcome to the rest—eh, Bowman!

*Bow.* Your lordship is in fine spirits!

*Æf.* Does not your lordship go through a great deal of pain?

*L. Chalk.* Pain! aye, and pleasure too; eh, Bowman! when I am in pain, I curse and swear it away again, and the moment it is gone, I lose no time; I drink the same wines, eat the same dishes, keep the same hours, the same company; and, notwithstanding the gravity of my wise doctors, I would not abstain from French wines and French cookery, to save the souls and bodies of the whole college of physicians—

*Æf.* My lord has fine spirits indeed! [*To Bow.*]

*L. Chalk.* You don't imagine, philosopher, that I have hobbled here with a bundle of complaints at my back. My legs, indeed, are something the worse for wear, but your waters, I suppose, cannot change or make 'em better; for if they could, you certainly would have try'd the virtues of 'em upon your own—eh, Bowman? ha, ha, ha!

*Bow.* Bravo, my lord, bravo!

*Æf.* My imperfections are from head to foot, as well as your lordship's.

*L. Chalk.* I beg your pardon there, Sir; though my body's impair'd, my head is as good as ever it was; and as a proof of this, I'll lay you a hundred guineas—



*Æs.* Does your lordship propose a wager as a proof of the goodness of your head?

*L. Chalk.* And why not? Wagers are now-a-days the only proofs and arguments that are made use of by people of fashion: all disputes about politics, operas, trade, gaming, horse-racing, or religion, are determined now by six to four, and two to one; and persons of quality are by this method most agreeably releas'd from the hardship of thinking or reasoning upon any subject.

*Æs.* Very convenient truly!

*L. Chalk.* Convenient! aye, and moral too.---This invention of betting, unknown to you Greeks, among many other virtues, prevents bloodshed, and preserves family affections---

*Æs.* Prevents bloodshed!

*L. Chalk.* I'll tell you how; when gentlemen quarrell'd heretofore, what did they do?---they drew their swords---I have been run through the body myself, but no matter for that---what do they do now? They draw their purses---before the lye can be given, a wager is laid; and so, instead of resenting, we pocket our affronts.

*Æs.* Most casuistically argued, indeed, my lord; but how can it preserve family affections?

*L. Chalk.* I'll tell you that too---An old woman, you'll allow, Mr. *Æsop*, at all times, to be but a bad thing---What say you, Bowman?

*Bow.* A very bad thing indeed, my lord.

*L. Chalk.* Ergo, an old woman with a good constitution, and a damn'd large jointure upon your estate, is the devil---My mother was the very thing---and yet from the moment I *pitted* her, I never once wish'd her dead, but was really uneasy when she tumbled down stairs, and did not speak a single word for a whole fortnight.

*Æs.* Affectionate indeed!--but what does your lordship mean by *pitted* her?

*L. Chalk.* 'Tis a term of ours upon these occasions---I back'd her life against two old countesses, an aunt of Sir Harry Rattle's that was troubled with an asthma, my fat landlady at Salt-hill, and the mad-woman at Tunbridge, at five hundred each per annum: she out-liv'd 'em all but the last, by which means I hedg'd off a damn'd jointure, made her life an advantage to me, and so continued my filial affections to her last moments.

*Æs.* I am fully satisfied---and, in return, your lordship may command me.

*L. Chalk.* None of your waters for me; damn 'em all; I never drink any but at Bath---I came merely for a little conversation with you, and to see your Elysian Fields here---[*Looking about through his glass.*] which, by the bye, Mr. *Æsop*, are laid out most detestably---No taste, no fancy in the whole world!--Your river there---what d'ye call---

*Æs.* Styx---

*L. Chalk.* Ay, Styx---why 'tis as straight as Fleet-ditch---You should have given it a serpentine sweep, and slope the banks of it---The place, indeed, has very fine capabilities; but you should clear the wood to the left, and clump the trees upon the right. In short, the whole wants variety, extent, contrast, and inequality---[*Going towards the orchestra, stops suddenly, and looks into the pit.*] Upon my word, here's a very fine hah-hah! and a most curious collection of ever-greens and flow'r-ing-thrubs---

*Æs.* We let nature take her course; our chief entertainment is contemplation, which I suppose is not allowed to interrupt your lordship's pleasures.

*L. Chalk.* I beg your pardon there---No man has ever studied or drank harder than I have---except

my chaplain; and I'll match my library and cellar against any nobleman's in christendom---shan't I, Bowman, eh?

*Bow.* That you may indeed, my Lord; and I'll go your lordship's halves. Ha, ha, ha!

*Æs.* If your lordship will apply more to the first, and drink our waters to forget the last---

*L. Chalk.* What, relinquish my bottle! What the devil shall I do to kill time then?

*Æs.* Has your lordship no wife or children to entertain you?

*L. Chalk.* Children! not I, faith; my wife has, for aught I know. I have not seen her these seven years---

*Æs.* You surprize me!

*L. Chalk.* 'Tis the way of the world, for all that.---I married for a fortune; she for a title. When we both had got what we wanted, the sooner we parted the better. We did so; and are now waiting for the happy moment, that will give to one of us the liberty of playing the same farce over again;---eh, Bowman!

*Bow.* Good, good; you have puzzled the philosopher.

*Æs.* The Greeks esteem'd matrimonial happiness their summum bonum.

*L. Chalk.* More fools they! 'tis not the only thing they were mistaken in. My brother Dick, indeed, married for love; and he and his wife have been fattening these five and twenty years, upon their summum bonum, as you call it. They have had a dozen and half of children, and may have half a dozen more, if an apoplexy don't step in, and interrupt their summum bonum---Eh, Bowman? ha! ha! ha!

*Bow.* Your lordship never said a better thing in your life.

*L. Chalk.* 'Tis lucky for the nation, to be sure, that there are people who breed, and are fond of one another. One man of elegant notions is sufficient in a family; for which reason I have bred up Dick's eldest son myself; and a fine gentleman he is---is not he, Bowman?

*Bow.* A very fine gentleman indeed, my lord.

*L. Chalk.* And as for the rest of the litter, they may fondle and fatten upon summum bonum, as their loving parents have done before 'em.

*Bow.* Look there! my Lord---I'll be hang'd if that is not your lordship's nephew in the grove.

*Æs.* I dare swear it is. He has been here just now, and has entertained me with his elegant notions.

*L. Chalk.* Let us go to him; I'll lay six to four that he has been gallanting with some of the beauties of antiquity---Heien or Cleopatra, I warrant you!--Egad, let Lucretia take care of herself; she'll catch a Tarquin, I can tell her that. He is his uncle's own nephew, ha, ha, ha! Egad, I find myself in spirits; I'll go and coquet a little myself with them. Bowman, lend me your arm; and you, William, hold me up a little---[*William treads upon his toes.*]---Ho! damn the fellow, he always treads upon my toes---Eugh---I shan't be able to gallant it this half hour. Well, dear philosopher, dispose of your water to those that want it. There is no one action of my life, or qualification of my mind and body, that is a burden to me; and there is nothing in your world, or in ours, I have to wish for, unless that you could rid me of my wife, and furnish me with a better pair of legs---Eh, Bowman---Come along, come along.

*Bow.* Game to the last, my lord!

[*Exit Lord Chalk and Bow.*]

*Æf.* How flattering is folly! His lordship here, supported only by vanity, vivacity, and his friend Mr. Bowman, can fancy himself the wisest, and is the happiest of mortals.

*Enter Mr. and Mrs. Tatoo.*

*Mrs. Tat.* Why don't you come along, Mr. Tatoo? what the deuce are you afraid of?

*Æf.* Don't be angry, young lady: the gentleman is your husband, I suppose.

*Mrs. Tat.* How do you know that, eh? What, you an't all conjurors in this world, are you?

*Æf.* Your behaviour to him is a sufficient proof of his condition, without the gift of conjuration.

*Mrs. Tat.* Why I was as free with him before marriage, as I am now; I never was coy or prudish in my life.

*Æf.* I believe you, Madam; pray, how long have you been married? You seem to be very young, lady.

*Mrs. Tat.* I am old enough for a husband, and have been married long enough to be tired of one.

*Æf.* How long, pray?

*Mrs. Tat.* Why above three months; I married Mr. Tatoo without my guardian's consent.

*Æf.* If you married him with your own consent, I think you might continue your affection a little longer.

*Mrs. Tat.* What signifies what you think, if I don't think so? We are quite tired of one another, and are come to drink some of your le---lethally---lethally, I think they call it, to forget one another, and be unmarried again.

*Æf.* The waters can't divorce you, Madam; and you may easily forget him, without the assistance of Lethe.

*Mrs. Tat.* Ay! how so?

*Æf.* By remembering continually he is your husband; there are several ladies have no other receipt---But what does the gentleman say to this?

*Mrs. Tat.* What signifies what he says? I an't so young and so foolish as that comes to, to be directed by my husband, or to care what either he says, or you say.

*Mr. Tat.* Sir, I was a drummer in a marching regiment, when I ran way with that young lady---I immediately bought out of the corps, and thought myself made for ever: little imagining that a poor vain fellow was purchasing fortune, at the expence of his happiness.

*Æf.* 'Tis even so, friend; fortune and felicity are as often at variance as man and wife.

*Mr. Tat.* I found it so, Sir; this high life (as I thought it) did not agree with me; I have not laugh'd, and scarcely slept since my advancement; and unless your wisdom can alter her notions, I must e'en quit the blessings of a fine lady and her portion; and, for content, have recourse to eight-pence a day, and my drum again.

*Æf.* Pray who has advis'd you to a separation?

*Mrs. Tat.* Several young ladies of my acquaintance, who tell me they are not angry at me for marrying him; but being fond of him now I have married him; and they say I should be as compleat a fine lady as any of 'em, if I would but procure a separate divorcement.

*Æf.* Pray, Madam, will you let me know what you call a fine lady?

*Mrs. Tat.* Why, a fine lady, and a fine gentleman, are two of the finest things upon earth.

*Æf.* I have just now had the honour of knowing what a fine gentleman is; so pray confine yourself to the lady.

*Mrs. Tat.* A fine lady, before marriage, lives

with her papa and mamma, who breed her up; she learns to despise 'em, and resolves to do nothing they bid her; this makes her such a prodigious favourite, that she wants for nothing.

*Æf.* So, lady.

*Mrs. Tat.* When once she is her own mistress then comes the pleasure!—

*Æf.* Pray let us hear.

*Mrs. Tat.* She lies in bed all morning, rather about all day, and sits up all night; she goes everywhere, and sees every thing; knows every body, and loves nobody; ridicules her friends, coquet with her lovers, sets 'em together by the ears, tells fibs, makes mischief, buys china, cheats at cards, keeps a pug dog, and hates the parsons; she laughs much, talks loud, never blushes, says what she will, does what she will, goes where she will, marries whom she pleases, hates her husband in a month, breaks his heart in four, becomes a widow, slips from her gallants, and begins the world again—There's a life for you; what do you think of a fine lady now?

*Æf.* As I expected, you are very young, lady, and if you are not very carefully, your natural propensity to noise and affectation will run you headlong into folly, extravagance, and repentance.

*Mrs. Tat.* What would you have me do?

*Æf.* Drink a large quantity of Lethe to the top of your acquaintance; and do you, Sir, drink another to forget this false step of your wife; whilst you remember her folly, you can never thoroughly regard her;—and whilst you keep good company, lady, as you call it, and follow their example, you can never have a just regard for your husband; so both drink and be happy.

*Mrs. Tat.* Well, give it me whilst I am in the humour, or I shall certainly change my mind again.

*Æf.* Be patient, till the rest of the company drink, and divert yourself, in the mean time, with walking in the grove.

*Mrs. Tat.* Well, come along, husband, and keep me in humour, or I shall beat you such an alarm as you never beat in all your life.

[*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Tatoo.*]

*Enter Frenchman, singing.*

*French.* Monsieur, votre serviteur---Pourquoi repondez vous pas? je dis que je suis votre serviteur—

*Æf.* I don't understand you, Sir.

*French.* Ah, le barbare! Il ne parle pas Francois. Vat, Sir, you no speak de French tongue?

*Æf.* No really, Sir, I am not so polite.

*French.* En verité, monsieur Æfop, you have much politesse, if one may judge by your figure and appearance.

*Æf.* Nor you much wisdom, if one may judge of your head, by the ornaments about it.

*French.* Qu'est cela donc? Vat you mean to frost a man, Sir?

*Æf.* No, Sir, 'tis to you I am speaking.

*French.* Vel, Sir, I not a man! vat is you take me for? vat I beast? vat I horse? parbleu!

*Æf.* If you insist upon it, Sir, I would advise you to lay aside your wings and tail, for they undoubtedly eclipse your manhood.

*French.* Upon my word, Sir, if you treat a gentleman of my rank and qualité comme ça, depend upon it, I shall be a lital en cavalier vis you.

*Æf.* Pray, Sir, of what rank and quality are you?

*French.* Sir, I am a marquis Francois; j'entre les beaux arts, Sir, I have been en avanturier over the world; and am a present en Angleterre,

Inglande, vere I am more honoré and carefs den ever I vas<sup>n</sup> in my own countrie, or inteed any vere else—

*Æf.* And pray, Sir, what is your business in England?

*French.* I am arrive dere, Sir, pour polir la nation—de Inglis, Sir, have too much a lead in deir heels, and too much a tought in deir head; so, Sir, if I can ligen bote, I shall make dem tout a fait Francois, and quite anoder ting.

*Æf.* And pray, Sir, in what particular accomplishments does your merit consist?

*French.* Sir, I speak de French, j'ai bonne adresse, I dance un minuet, I sing des littel chansons, and I have—une tolerable assurance; en fin, Sir, my merit consist in one vard— I am a foreigner— and entre nous—vile de Englia be so great a fool to lope de foreigner better dan demselves, de foreigners would still be more great a fool, did dey not leave their own counterie, vere dey have nothing at all, and come to Inglande, vere dey vant for nothing at all, pardie—Cela n'est il pas vrai, Monsieur *Æfop*?

*Æf.* Well, Sir, what is your business with me?

*French.* Attendez un peu, you shall hear, Sir— I am in love vit the grande fortune of one Englis lady; and de lady, she be in love with my qualité and bagatelles. Now, Sir, me want twenty or thirty douzains of your vaters, for fear I be obligé to leave Inglande, before I have fini dis grande affaire.

*Æf.* Twenty or thirty dozen! for what?

*French.* For my crediturs; to make 'em forget de way to my lodgement, and no trouble me for de future.

*Æf.* What, have you so many creditors!

*French.* So many! begar I have 'em dans tous les quartiers de la ville, in all parts of de town, fait—

*Æf.* Wonderful and surprizing!

*French.* Vonderfull! vat is vonderful—dat I should borrow money?

*Æf.* No, Sir, that any body should lend it you—

*French.* En verité vous vous trompez; you do mistake it, mon ami: if fortune give me no money, nature gives me des talens; j'ai des talens, Monsieur *Æfop*; vech are de same ting—par exemple; de Englisman have de money, I have de flat-terie and bonne adresse; and a little of dat from a French tongue is very good credit and securité for tousand pound—Eh bien donc! sal I have dis twenty or thirty douzains of your water? Ouy, ou non?

*Æf.* 'Tis impossible, Sir.

*French.* Impossible! pourquoi donc? vy not?

*Æf.* Because if every fine gentleman, who owes money, should make the same demand, we should have no water left for our other customers.

*French.* Que voulez vous que je fasse donc? Vat must I do then, Sir?

*Æf.* Marry the lady as soon as you can, pay your debts with part of her portion, drink the water to forget your extravagance, retire with her to your own country, and be a better economist for the future.

*French.* Go to my own contré!—Je vous demande pardon, I had much rather stay vere I am;—I cannot go dere, upon my vard—

*Æf.* Why not, my friend?

*French.* Entre nous, I had much rather pass for one French Marquis in Inglande, keep bonne compagnie, manger des delicatesses, and do no ting at all; dan keep a shop en Provence, couper and friffer les cheveux, and live upon soup and sallade de rest of my life—

*Æf.* I cannot blame you for your choice; and if other people are so blind, not to distinguish the bar-ber from the fine gentleman, their folly must be

their punishment—and you shall take the benefit of the water with them.

*French.* Monsieur *Æfop*, sans flatterie ou compliments, I am your very humble serviteur—Jean Frisseron en Provence, ou Le Marquis de Pouville en Angleterre. [*Exit Frenchman.*]

*Æf.* Shield me and defend me! another fine lady!

*Enter Mrs. Riot.*

*Mrs. Riot.* A monster! a filthy brute! your watermen are as unpolite upon the Styx as upon the Thames—Stow a lady of fashion with tradesmen's wives and mechanicks—Ah! what's this! *Ser-beerus*, or *Plutus*? [*Seeing Æfop.*] Am I to be frighted with all the monsters of this internal world!

*Æf.* What is the matter, lady?

*Mrs. Riot.* Every thing is the matter, my spirits are uncompos'd, and every circumstance about me in a perfect dilemma.

*Æf.* What has disorder'd you thus?

*Mrs. Riot.* Your filthy boatman, *Scarroon*, there.

*Æf.* Charon, lady, you mean.

*Mrs. Riot.* And who are you, you ugly creature, you? If I see any more of you I shall die with temerity.

*Æf.* The wife think me handsome, Madam.

*Mrs. Riot.* I hate the wife. But who are you?

*Æf.* I am *Æfop*, Madam, honour'd this day by *Proserpine* with the distribution of the waters of *Lethe*. Command me.

*Mrs. Riot.* Shew me to the pump-room then, fellow—where's the company?—I die in solitude.

*Æf.* What company?

*Mrs. Riot.* The best company, people of fashion! the beau monde! shew me to none of your gloomy souls, who wander about in your groves and streams;—shew me to glittering halls, enchanting masquerades, ravishing operas, and all the polite enjoyments of *Elysian*.

*Æf.* This is a language unknown to me, lady—no such fine doings here, and very little good company (as you call it) in *Elysium*—

*Mrs. Riot.* What! no operas! eh! no *Elysian* then! [*Sings fantastically in Italian.*] 'Sfortunate *monticelli*! banish'd *Elysian*, as well as the Hay-market! Your taste here, I suppose, rises no higher than your *Shakespeares* and your *Johnsons*; oh, you *Goats* and *Vandils*! in the name of barbarity take 'em to yourselves, we are tired of 'em upon earth—one goes indeed to a play-house sometimes, because one does not know how else one can kill one's time—every body goes, because—because—all the world's there—but for my part—call *Scarroon*, and let him take me back again, I'll stay no longer here—stupid immortals!

*Æf.* You are a happy woman, that have neither cares nor follies to disturb you.

*Mrs. Riot.* Cares! ha! ha! ha! Nay, now I must laugh in your ugly face, my dear! what cares, does your wisdom think, can enter into the circle of a fine lady's enjoyments?

*Æf.* By the account I have just heard of a fine lady's life, her very pleasures are both follies and cares; so drink the water, and forget them, Madam.

*Mrs. Riot.* Oh gad! that was so like my husband now—forget my follies! forget the fashion, forget my being, the very quincence and empti-ty of a fine lady! the fellow would make me as great a brute as my husband.

*Æf.* You have a husband then, Madam?

*Mrs. Riot.* Yes, I think so—a husband and no



husband---come, fetch me some of your water; if I must forget something, I had as good forget him, for he's grown insufferable o'late.

*Æs.* I thought, Madam, you had nothing to complain of---

*Mrs. Riot.* One's husband, you know, is almost next to nothing.

*Æs.* How has he offended you?

*Mrs. Riot.* The man talks of nothing but his money, and my extravagance---won't remove out of the filthy city, though he knows I die for the other end of the town, nor leave off his nasty merchandising, tho' I've labour'd to convince him he loses money by it. The man was once tolerable enough, and let me have money when I wanted it; but now he's never out of a tavern, and is grown so valiant, that, do you know---he has presum'd to contradict me, and refuse me money upon every occasion.

*Æs.* And all this without any provocation on your side?

*Mrs. Riot.* Laud! how should I provoke him? I seldom see him, very seldom speak to the creature, unless I want mon-y; besides, he's out all day---

*Æs.* And you all night, Madam: is it not so?

*Mrs. Riot.* I keep the best company, Sir, and day-light is no agreeable sight to a polite assembly; the sun is very well and comfortable, to be sure, for the lower part of the creation; but to ladies who have a true taste of pleasure, wax candles, or no candles, are preferable to all the sun-beams in the universe---

*Æs.* Preposterous fancy!

*Mrs. Riot.* And so, most delicate sweet Sir, you don't approve my scheme; ha! ha! ha! oh, you ugly devil you! have you the vanity to imagine people of fashion will mind what you say? Or that to learn politeness and breeding, it is necessary to take a lesson of morality out of *Æsop's* fables, ha! ha! ha!

*Æs.* It is necessary to get a little reflection somewhere; when these spirits leave you, and your senses are forsighted, what must be the consequence?

*Mrs. Riot.* Oh, I have the best receipt in the world for the vapours; and lest the poison of your precepts should taint my vivacity, I must beg leave to take it now, by way of anecdote.

*Æs.* Oh, by all means---ignorance, and vanity!

*Mrs. Riot.* [*Drawing out a card.*] Lady Rantan's compliments to Mrs. Riot.

## S O N G.

### I.

*The card invites, in crowds we fly,  
To join the jovial rout, full cry;  
What joys, from cares and plagues all day,  
To bid to the midnight bark-away.*

### II.

*Nor want, nor pain, nor grief, nor care,  
Nor drowsy husbands enter there;  
The brisk, the bold, the young, and gay,  
All bid to the midnight bark-away.*

### III.

*Uncounted strikes the morning clock,  
And drowsy watchmen idly knock;  
Till day-light peeps, we sport and play,  
And rear to the jolly bark-away.*

## IV.

*When tir'd with sport, to-bed we creep,  
And kill the tedious day with sleep;  
To-morrow's welcome call obey,  
And again to the midnight bark-away.*

*Mrs. Riot.* There's a life for you, you old fright! so trouble your head no more about your betters; I am so perfectly satisfied with myself, that I will not alter an atom of me, for all you can say; so you may bottle up your philosophical waters for your own use, or for the fools that want 'em---Gad's my life! there's Billy Butterfly in the grove, I must go to him---we shall so rally your wisdom between us---ha, ha, ha, ha.

*The brisk, the bold, the young, the gay,*

*All bid to the midnight bark-away.* [*Ex. singing.*]

*Æs.* Unhappy woman! Nothing can retrieve her; when the head has once a wrong bias, 'tis ever obstinate, in proportion to it's weakness; but here comes one who seems to have no occasion for Lethe to make him more happy than he is.

*Enter Drunken Man and Taylor.*

*D. Man.* Come along, neighbour Snip; come along, Taylor; don't be afraid of hell before you die, you sniv'ling dog you.

*Tay.* For Heaven's sake, Mr. Riot, don't be so boisterous with me, lest we should offend the powers below.

*Æs.* What in the name of ridicule have we here! So, Sir, what are you?

*D. Man.* Drunk---very drunk, at your service.

*Æs.* That's a piece of information I did not want.

*D. Man.* And yet it's all the information I can give you.

*Æs.* Pray, Sir, what brought you hither?

*D. Man.* Curiosity, and a hackney-coach.

*Æs.* I mean, Sir, have you any occasion for my waters?

*D. Man.* Yes, great occasion; if you'll do me the favour to qualify them with some good arrack and orange-juice.

*Æs.* Sir!

*D. Man.* Sir! Don't stare so, old gentleman; let us have a little conversation with you.

*Æs.* I would know if you have any thing oppresses your mind, and makes you unhappy.

*D. Man.* You are certainly a very great fool, old gentleman; did you ever know a man drunk and unhappy at the same time?

*Æs.* Never otherwise, for a man who has lost his senses---

*D. Man.* Has lost the most troublesome companions in the world, next to wives and bum-bailliffs.

*Æs.* But, pray, what is your business with me?

*D. Man.* Only to demonstrate to you that you are an ass---

*Æs.* Your humble servant.

*D. Man.* And to shew you, that whilst I can get such liquor as I have been drinking all night, I shall never come for your water specifics against care and tribulation: however, old gentleman, if you'll do one thing for me, I shan't think my time and conversation thrown away upon you.

*Æs.* Any thing in my power.

*D. Man.* Why, then, here's a small matter for you; and, do you hear me? get me one of the best whores in your territories.

*Æs.* What do you mean?

*D. Man.* To refresh myself in the shades here

after my journey---Suppose now you introduce me to Proserpine, who knows how far my figure and address may tempt her; and if her majesty is over nice, shew me but her maids of honour, and I'll warrant you they'll snap at a bit of fresh mortality.

*Æs.* Monstrous!

*D. Man.* Well, well, if it is monstrous, I say no more; if her majesty and retinue are so very virtuous, I say no more; but I'll tell you what, old friend, if you'll lend me your wife for half an hour; when you make a visit above, you shall have mine as long as you please; and if upon trial you should like mine better than your own, you shall carry her away to the devil with you, and ten thousand thanks into the bargain.

*Æs.* This is not to be borne; either be silent, or you'll repent this drunken insolence.

*D. Man.* What a cross old fool it is!--I presume, Sir, from the information of your hump, and your wisdom, that your name is---is---what the devil is it?

*Æs.* *Æsop*, at your service.

*D. Man.* The same, the same---I knew you well enough, you old sensible pimp you---many a time has my flesh felt birch upon your account; pr'ythee, what possesse'd thee to write such foolish old stories of a cock and a bull, and I don't know what, to plague poor innocent lads with? It was damn'd cruel in you, let me tell you that.

*Æs.* I am now convinc'd, Sir, I have written 'em to very little purpose.

*D. Man.* To very little, I assure you; but never mind it---Damn it, you are a fine old Grecian, for all that---[Claps him on the back.] Come here, Snip--is not he a fine old Grecian? And tho' he is not the handsomest, or best dress'd man in the world, he has ten times more sense than either you or I have.

*Tay.* Pray, neighbour, introduce me.

*D. Man.* I'll do it---Mr. *Æsop*, this sneaking gentleman is my taylor, and an honest man he was, while he lov'd his bottle; but since he turn'd methodist, and took to preaching, he has cabbag'd one yard in six from all his customers. Now you know him, hear what he has to say, while I go and pick up in the wood here. Upon my soul, you are a fine old Grecian! [Exit *D. Man.*]

*Æs.* [To *Taylor.*] Come, friend, don't be dejected; what is your business?

*Tay.* I am troubled in mind.

*Æs.* Is your case particular, friend?

*Tay.* No, indeed, I believe it is pretty general in our parish.

*Æs.* What is it? speak out, friend.

*Tay.* It runs continually in my head, that I am---

*Æs.* What?

*Tay.* A cuckold.

*Æs.* Have a care, friend; jealousy is a rank weed, and chiefly takes root in a barren soil.

*Tay.* I am sure my head is full of nothing else---

*Æs.* But how came you to a knowledge of your misfortune? Has not your wife as much wit as you?

*Tay.* A great deal more, Sir; and that is one reason for my believing myself dishonour'd---

*Æs.* Though your reason has some weight in it, yet it does not amount to a conviction.

*Tay.* I have more to say for myself, if your worship will but hear me.

*Æs.* I shall attend to you.

*Tay.* My wife has such very high blood in her, that she has lately turn'd papist, and is always railing at me and the government. The priest and the

am afraid he has persuaded her, that it will save her precious soul, if she cuckolds a heretick taylor.

*Æs.* Oh, don't think so hardly of 'em.

*Tay.* Lord, Sir, you don't know what tricks are going forward above! Religion indeed is the outside stuff, but wickedness is the lining.

*Æs.* Why, you are in a passion, friend; if you would but exert yourself thus at a proper time, you might keep the fox from your poultry.

*Tay.* Lord, Sir, my wife has as much passion again as I have; and whenever she's up, I curb my temper, sit down, and say nothing.

*Æs.* What remedy have you to propose for this misfortune?

*Tay.* I would propose to dip my head in the river, to wash away my fancies; and if you'll let me take a few bottles to my wife, if the water is of a cooling nature, I may perhaps be easy that way; but I shall do as your worship pleases.

*Æs.* I am afraid this method won't answer, friend: suppose therefore you drink to forget your suspicions, for they are nothing more; and let your wife drink to forget your uneasiness---a mutual confidence will succeed, and consequently mutual happiness.

*Tay.* I have such a spirit, I can never bear to be dishonour'd in my bed.

*Æs.* The water will cool your spirit, and if it can but lower your wife's, the business is done---Go for a moment to your companion, and you shall drink presently; but do nothing rashly.

*Tay.* I can't help it, rashness is my fault, Sir; but age and more experience, I hope, will cure me---your servant, Sir---Indeed he is a fine old Grecian! [Exit *Taylor.*]

*Æs.* Poor fellow, I pity him.

*Enter Mercury.*

*Mer.* What can be the meaning, *Æsop*, that there are no more mortals coming over? I perceive there is a great bustle on the other side the Styx, and Charon has brought his boat over without passengers.

*Æs.* Here he is to answer for himself.

*Enter Charon, laughing.*

*Char.* Oh! oh! Oh!

*Mer.* What diverts you so, Charon?

*Char.* Why, there's the devil to do among the mortals yonder; they are all together by the ears.

*Æs.* What's the matter?

*Char.* There are some ladies, who have been disputing so long and so loud about taking place and precedence, that they have set their relations a tilting at one another, to support their vanity: the standers-by are some of them so frightened, and some of them so diverted at the quarrel, that they have not time to think of their misfortunes; so I've left them to settle their prerogatives by themselves, and be friends at their leisure.

*Mer.* What's to be done, *Æsop*?

*Æs.* Discharge these we have, and finish the business of the day.

*Enter Drunken Man and Mrs. Riot.*

*D. Man.* I never went to pick up a whore in my life, but the first woman I laid hold of was my dear virtuous wife, and here she is---

*Æs.* Is that lady your wife?

*D. Man.* Yes, Sir; and yours, if you please to accept her.

*Æs.* Though she has formerly given too much into fashionable follies, she now repents, and will be more prudent for the future.

*D. Man.* Look'e, Mr. *Æsop*, all your preaching and morality signifies nothing at all; but she

your wisdom seems bent upon our reformation, I'll tell you the only way, old boy, to bring it about. Let me have enough of your water to settle my head; and throw madam into the river.

-Æs. 'Tis in vain to reason with such beings: therefore, Mercury, summon the mortals from the grove, and we'll dismiss 'em to earth, as happy as Lethe can make 'em—

## S O N G.

By MERCURY.

## I.

*Come mortals, come, come follow me,  
Come follow, follow, follow me,  
To mirth, and joy, and jollity;  
Hark, hark, the call, come, come and drink,  
And leave your cares by Lethe's brink.*

## CHORUS.

*Away then come, come, come away,  
And life shall hence be holiday;  
Nor jealous fears, nor strife, nor pain,  
Shall vex the jovial heart again.*

## II.

*To Lethe's brink then follow all,  
Then follow, follow, follow all,  
'Tis pleasure courts, obey the call;  
And mirth, and jollity, and joy,  
Shall every future hour employ.*

## CHORUS.

*Away then come, come, come away,  
And life shall hence be holiday;  
Nor jealous fears, nor strife, nor pain,  
Shall vex the jovial heart again.*

[During the song, the characters enter from the grove.

Æs. Now, mortals, attend; I have perceived from your examinations, that you have mistaken the effects of your distempers for the cause; you would willingly be relieved from many things which interfere with your passions and affections; while your vices, from which all your cares and misfortunes arise, are totally forgotten and neglected. Then follow me, and drink to the forgetfulness of vice—

'Tis vice alone disturbs the human breast;  
Care dies with guilt—be virtuous, and be blest.

